

THE LIGUORIAN



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* * *

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* * *

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THE LIGUORIAN

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Devoted to the Growth of Catholic Belief and Practice*

Vol. XIV.

JANUARY, 1926

No. 1

Reverie and Rebuke

O hasten hide your face, Old Year,
You look so pale and wan
And hold for me but bitter tear
For wasted moments gone.

You bear no record of great things,
But failures dismal deep,
And as the chime your farewell rings,
For you I needs must weep.

O let me lift your veil, New Year,
And glimpse your coming days,
That I foresee each smile and tear
Nor meet them in amaze.

O foolish mortal, steeped in pride,
What worth resolves so high?
Did not thy Master Crucified
To men a Failure die?

What boot thy losses in the fight,
If but thy heart above
This empty earth shall take its flight.
And work alone for Love?

Each day that dawns is God's Own gift,
Not for thy foolish whim.
With God each day thy burden lift,
Thy future leave to Him.

J. R. Melvin, C.Ss.R.

Father Tim Casey

HOMELY SINS

C. D. McENNIRY, C.Ss.R.

"Speaking of Confession," said Father Casey, "how is it that you girls know nothing about examination of conscience?"

"Examination of conscience," cried Miriam, "of course we know about it—we know *all* about it. It is thinking of your sins before you go to Confession."

"Since you know what it is, why don't you do it?"

"Why *I* always do," declared Lucy.

"So do I. So do I," chimed in the others.

Heedless of their protestations, the priest continued:

"There is, for instance, the duty to love, honor, and obey your parents. Did you examine your conscience on that the last time you went to Confession, Lucy?"

"Certainly—or—well—at least I confessed that I had disobeyed my mother."

"And you had in mind certain definite occasions on which you had been disobedient?"

"I wouldn't be so sure of that," said Lucy. "But I disobey once in a while—everybody does. So I guess that covered the ground."

"Not what one might call a very thorough examination," commented the priest. Then, after a pause: "No, not just the kind of examination that would help you see precisely where you stand—to be sorry for what you have done—to take practical means not to do it again."

"What do you want us to do, Father?" queried Henrietta pertly; "keep a classified list, and check every time mamma tells us to shut the door and we don't?"

"No, child, I am not counseling you to do anything foolish. But you might do this: spend a few moments reflecting on your duties as a daughter and how you fulfilled them. There is the duty of gratitude. Your parents are always doing something for you. How many times last week did you show them by your words, or at least by your actions, that you were grateful? Did you ever once say: 'Mamma, this is a dandy dinner you have today,' or 'Gee, it's great to get home. You keep the old place so nice and comfy.' Perhaps the only time you took any notice of mother's efforts for your welfare was when you found

fault with something. That is ingratitude. While ingratitude is not, as a rule, a big sin, it is always a mean, selfish sin, and God detests it."

"I, not mother, do the cooking in our house," observed Cora.

"Even though father and mother do not feed and care for you now, they did so for many a year. Are you grateful for that?"

"Oh, yes, Father," all answered together.

"How do you show it? Do you pray for them?"

"My parents aren't dead," said guileless Alice.

"Must they die before you will pray for them—before you will perform this duty of gratitude toward them? They need your prayers far more while they are alive—while their eternal salvation is still in doubt—than after their death. Your prayers may obtain for them the very graces that will make them save their souls. The prayers of a child for its father and mother are powerful with God. The child that does not say some little prayer for its father and mother every day is surely guilty of ingratitude. During all the long years you were dependent on them, they never let a day pass without doing many things for you; surely you should not let a day pass without doing this little bit for them. As you pray for them during their lifetime, so you will continue to pray for them after their death. A father and mother suffering in purgatory, and a thankless child on earth neglecting to do anything for their relief must be an ugly sight for God and His holy angels."

"We can pray for them, Father. But after we are eighteen, we don't have to obey them, do we?"

"Properly understood, the fourth commandment binds you, whether you are eighteen or eighty."

"But if your parents don't want you to go to dances or anything? You have to have some fun."

"Of course you have to have some fun. Everybody needs a reasonable amount of innocent recreation. And I am sure none of your fathers or mothers objects to that. It is their very love for you and their desire for your best interests which makes them fear certain forms of amusement that may be hurtful to your body and your soul."

"But they have such queer, unreasonable ideas about what is hurtful."

"Now, Henrietta, that is not a very dutiful remark to make about

your parents. After you will have seen as much of the world as they have, perhaps you, too, will hold some of the views which you now stigmatize as queer and unreasonable. Be careful about condemning other people's views, as though you were infallible; there is generally something to be said on both sides of a question. Your parents are persons of sound judgment—otherwise they would not have such an intelligent daughter. Why not listen respectfully to their admonitions, talk matters over with them, tell them where you have been and what you have been doing, and let them see that you are trying to take their advice to heart? Thus they will know that you are prudent and sensible. They will have confidence in your ability to take care of yourself, and they will see no reason for hampering you by unnecessary restraint."

"Tell them where we have been and what we have done! Oh, Father, we can't do that!"

"Why not? Are you ashamed of where you have been and what you have done?"

"No, Father, we are not ashamed."

"Wouldn't they listen to you?"

"My mamma would listen—I'll tell the world. She is always trying to find out everything. I can't have a secret but she must do all in her power to get hold of it."

"And would you deprive her of even this little pleasure? Compare your daily life with hers. You have dozens of young and attractive companions. You have diversions of every description. True, you do not derive any particular pleasure from talking over your amusements with your mother—you have so many more attractive persons to talk with. But your mother has only you. Her whole soul is wrapped up in you. That is why she is so eager to know everything that you are doing. She cannot take part in the pleasures which absorb so much of your time. She would be content if she could talk them over with you and, as it were, enjoy them through you. Is it not selfish for you to deprive her of this pleasure which you could so easily give her?"

Henrietta was silent. Marion took the floor.

"Mamma scolded and scolded because I got home so late Tuesday night. I knew it wasn't right, but there was no sense in raising such a fuss when it was all over. I didn't have to tell that in Confession, did I, Father?"

"When she scolded, what did you say?"

"I didn't say anything. She made me sore, and so, I just let her rave."

"Now, think for a moment," said the priest, "is that a picture of a happy home? A daughter sullen and silent—a mother angry and exasperated—the mother growing more and more exasperated at the daughter's sullenness and the daughter growing more and more sullen at the mother's exasperation."

"Well, Father, what would you tell me to do?"

"Did not your own heart tell you what to do? You admit that you stayed out much longer than was right and that you knew it. All that time your poor mother was suffering. By eleven or twelve, you had already had an evening of pleasure, while she was home alone. But instead of coming home then, you stayed out several hours longer. In order to have still more pleasure, you caused her hours of pain and grief and anxiety—and you did it deliberately. What should you do? Go to her at once, acknowledge your fault, beg her forgiveness, and promise never again to be so unkind to the best friend you have on earth."

"When you make us face the truth and look at it squarely," said Lucy, "we must admit that it is small and mean for us to treat our mothers in that way."

"Mamma can't say that I treat her mean," declared Grace; "I always get home early."

"You may get home early, but that is not everything. How do you treat her while you are at home? I, for one, was surprised to see that you could be so cruel toward her as you were last Wednesday evening, when I dropped in for a call and found the house full of visitors."

"Father, I didn't treat her cruelly. I remember now that I made a special effort to be nice to her that evening, though she did get on my nerves with her endless ramblings about her aches and pains."

"No, no, Grace, not endless—for you very quickly shamed her into putting an end to them. Oh, you did it ever so sweetly and politely, but none the less efficiently, for it shut her up for the rest of the evening. I could see how your words cut her to the heart, that dear, good mother of yours."

Grace was a good girl. She made no attempt to hide the blush of

shame and regret which covered her face. Not in a spirit of self-defense, but to clear up a difficult, she persisted:

"Father, what else could I do? We had company, and the story of mamma's aches and remedies seemed such an idle topic—"

"Was the topic you introduced after silencing your mother any more important? Small talk—who danced with whom and who was turned down by whom."

"But at least, Father, the visitors enjoyed it, while mamma's ailments meant nothing to them."

"Grace, your visitors were cultured men and women. In visiting your home they wished to show honor and respect to the head of the house. Whatever topic would give her pleasure, was agreeable to them. Doing this act of kindness to a dear old friend meant more to them than discussing any particular subject. They regretted your depriving her of this little satisfaction, and I can assure you, they did not approve of your conduct."

"I see, Father, that we are not so dutiful as we should be," said Lucy, "but it really is embarrassing at times to have mother present when we are entertaining company."

"Yes," replied the priest, "and I know girls who make that fact so brutally clear to mother that she has no choice but to hide herself alone in the kitchen, while they enjoy themselves with every passing acquaintance. They forget that when she was young and attractive she could have had a great deal more pleasure if she had not been burdened with them. They forget, too, that if distress or misfortune comes upon them, all these new-found friends will vanish and the only unfailing friend upon whom they can always lean is the old mother whom they relegate to the solitude of the kitchen. Unfortunately the desire for pleasure makes too many a young girl hard and selfish toward one who is hungering for the little crumbs of thoughtful kindness."

"The one lone topic in my home," said Harriet, "is money. What I do with my money—how I waste my money—why I don't turn in more money. It's so mercenary. I can't bear it."

"True, Harriet, it is mercenary to be over-desirous of getting money, but there is something worse, and that is to refuse to give money where money is due. That is injustice. You are working and drawing a fair salary. Do you give all you should to help along in the home?"

"I pay my board, and that ought to satisfy them."

"You would pay your board if you were living with a Hottentot. Aren't your father and mother any more to you than that? They kept up the monotonous struggle with poverty for eighteen years in order to rear you and educate you and prepare you for the position you now hold. Would not gratitude and filial love suggest that you do more for them than you would for a total stranger and lift from their tired shoulders at least a little of the load they have carried so long?"

"I need the rest for myself. I must have clothes and everything."

"Harriet," said the priest, "the girl who spends all she earns in decking herself out, does not amount to much. Make a little sacrifice. Be content with fewer and less expensive clothes. Many a time your father and mother had to do that so that you might have bread to eat."

"I got so exasperated that I told them the other day: 'If this keeps up I'll leave.' Maybe," she added, "it was very wrong for me to say that."

"It was worse than wrong—it was cowardly. You know very well that the home would be empty and cheerless and their poor old hearts would be broken, if you were to leave them. There is nothing they fear more. You knew all this, and therefore you took a cowardly advantage of them when you threatened to leave the home rather than help to lighten the burden of supporting it. If you gain your point and silence them by such a threat as that, it will be a cheap victory—a very cheap victory."

"Father," said Grace, "I know all you say is true. While listening to you I feel that I am going to be so awfully kind and gentle and patient. At the same time, I just know that after I get home and mother begins nagging and harping on the same old string, I shall be just as hateful as ever. Why, Father, I believe that even you, if you had to live with some of these dear, querulous old creatures, would lose your patience sometimes."

"Come, come, child, don't mix me up in this matter. If you take me as a model of patience, you won't get far. I am telling you what you ought to do, and I know that my doctrine is correct, but I am not volunteering to set the example. I have often marveled at you good Catholic girls—how patient and gentle you are with your parents, even under very trying circumstances. When I see that you can go so far, I should like to see you go farther—to become perfect in filial love, respect, and obedience."

The Student Abroad

NAPOLI II

J. W. BRENNAN, C.Ss.R.

For reasons best known to themselves, the companies arranging the tours for American pilgrims have generally had their clients come to Rome, remain five, six or seven days—rarely the correct length of time for the Jubilee, ten days—then return to the North via Florence and Venice. And just as often, the travelers on arriving in Rome, turned their thoughts to Naples and speculated on the possibilities of making the trip. Of course it would be possible, at additional expense and two days' time taken from some other part of the program. Not to disarrange the schedule, the stay in Rome would be indicated as an apt victim, whereupon the negotiations would often cease, for the pilgrims from America prized Rome and its sacred associations more and more highly with every day's sojourn. Those who did make the flying trip to Naples will recall it with more or less delight, the swoop into the city by fast express, the dash around the hills from the Vomero, with San Martino and St. Elmo, to the Capodimonte with its royal palace, the sultry ascent of Vesuvius, the interesting but dusty drive via Sorrento to Amalfi, with perhaps a charming visit to romantic Capri with its rugged, weather-beaten cliffs and mysterious grottoes.

Blessed be the traveler who can get along without the services of a professional guide, who is free from the trammels of a program made out weeks in advance and who has not too much wealth, for he will meander on his own pacific way viewing what he will, choosing cheap but under the circumstances much better means of conveyance, and pausing at his pleasure to drink in the beauties physical and spiritual of this wonderful region. And his memories will be lasting.

Just outside of Naples and off the two main beaten paths, the one to Vesuvius and the other to Amalfi, there are a number of quaint little towns, unspoiled by the invasion of tourist money, whose inhabitants still retain the industrious habits, the gentle courtesy and charming simplicity of their fathers. To a Redemptorist, in fact to any priest who has pored over the works of St. Alphonsus—and what priest has not?—the little country-town of Pagani, of all others, holds out the greatest attraction. In addition to its other charms, it has the distinc-

tion of being the last resting place of the great missionary, bishop, saint, Doctor of the Church—St. Alphonsus.

The town lies huddled in the lap of the mountains: on all sides, the land rises to uneven heights with here and there a jagged scar like the remains of an old wound, breaking the even surface of green. Occasionally the sight of a home or a monastery perched perilously on some projecting crag, with a sheer drop of some hundred feet beneath its outer walls makes one marvel that human beings should select such a site with miles of beautiful valley to choose from.

The arrival of the train from Naples is one of the social events of the day. A reception committee consisting of a squad of carrozzo-drivers was on hand to meet us and as we marched stolidly along the street, toting our baggage in approved fashion, they formed in line and drove slowly alongside us, earnestly offering to take us and our baggage at so much per. A Fascisti officer directed us to the trolley, and as we knew our way only via the street car, we bade our vociferous committee farewell. But they do not know discouragement, nor have they acquired understanding of American business methods. They take "no" for encouragement; they are the original "go-getters"; business schools in America should import one or two of these drivers to act as Professors of Perseverance. When the leader in the procession turned his horse and drove away, the second moved up. After a few minutes he gave place to a third, and the latter gentleman remained on the job till the trolley car hove in sight, down the narrow, winding street. A short ride on the battered little trolley brought us to the monastery.

First to view came the very neat facade of the church, and next to it the long plain wall of one wing of the monastery. In fact, the church, together with the three practically equal sections of the residence of the Fathers, forms a quadrangle, enclosing a beautiful old garden. At the farther end of the front section, there are still traces of another church. This was the original church of the first community founded by St. Alphonsus. Today it is used as a chapel and services are held there at stated periods. There it was that the Fathers began their special labors for souls; there it was that St. Alphonsus inculcated by word and example the special method of preaching sermons which is characteristic of Redemptorist sermons today. Just above the main door can be seen the tiny tribunes from which the Saint listened to the

Fathers speak, and they still tell of a severe correction given to a famous member of the community after the conclusion of what he had thought a very fine sermon.

Back of the quadrangle, the farm of the community, thanks to the good soil and mild climate, yields its treasures of grapes, figs, oranges and vegetables. Here in Italy the vegetables seem to be in season the year round. The only difficulty comes in the long dry season, and to offset this, a simple and still very clever system of irrigation is in use. A force pump could hardly do the work better. Not far from the one-man power pumping station, there stands an old orange tree whose tottering feet have been given the support of a cane, a stout solid post. The tree is reserved solely for its sacred associations, for it was planted by St. Alphonsus himself not long after the foundation of the Congregation.

Within the simple walls of the monastery, everything seems to speak of the holy Founder. Loving hands have kept guard over the hallowed spots, loving memories have retained all the treasured traditions and have passed them on to succeeding generations. The place where St. Alphonsus sat in the refectory, the rooms that he inhabited, the poor furniture that was allotted him to use, even the old pianoforte stands, old and silent now, a souvenir of pleasant evenings spent by the confreres when their talented Father played concerts for them; all these and more conspire to cause a peculiar impression on an appreciative visitor. One almost expects the Saint coming down a staircase or stepping unexpectedly from some room. He seems to be very near.

The rooms he used are remarkable monuments, mute testimonials to his character. In one there still exists the window he caused to be put in a side wall next to his bed, so that he could see the Tabernacle in the adjoining chapel, by night as well as by day. No wonder he could write his famous Visits to the Blessed Sacrament; no wonder their simple but compelling appeal has forced them to be edited and republished and translated till now they exist in every language and the copies extant run into unknown thousands. It was in that little chapel, too, that one day, while the Saint was saying Mass, a confrere entered suddenly and found him raised above the altar platform in ecstasy.

On another floor, the room in which he died, offers a most pathetic lesson in sainthood. It has remained much the same as it was when St. Alphonsus left it to claim his heavenly reward. Over in one corner,

the poor pallet—it can hardly be even flattered with the title of bed—which he used even during his stay in the Episcopal palace of St. Agatha of the Goths, preaches a sermon on poverty and self-abnegation that is irresistible. Very short and very low, its spring is a wooden frame; its support, two iron braces; its covering, a thin mattress, some rough sheets and a single woolen blanket, well worn through, and a little piece of fur that was used to give a little heat when the chill, damp days of winter brought their perils and their pains to the worn-out body. Next to the bed stands a padded chair which the Saint had to use in his last years when he was unable to move. In the other corner, there is the wheel-chair that once carried him to and fro from the chapel. Even from the door, its clumsy makeup can be seen; it may have carried the Saint safely enough, but it assuredly could not have added much in the way of comfort.

The adjoining room is a chapel, the chapel used by St. Alphonsus himself. The two rooms, chapel and living-room, are connected by a door-way, now closed by an iron grating. Visitors are allowed to enter the chapel, but must be satisfied with viewing the other room from the door-way. In the chapel, over the altar at which the Saint offered the Sacrifice of the Mass during his last years, there is a crucifix that makes an unusual impression on one, even after a casual glance at it. The artist who designed it must have chosen the moment when the dying Christ, looking to heaven, was forced in His anguish to cry out: "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" for the expressive features are drawn in mingled anguish and suffering of soul, and the eyes stare into the distance. One could expect such a crucifixion in the chapel of a Saint who had for one of his principal devotions a tender and deep devotion to the Passion of our Lord. And the visitor is not surprised at all, now, to hear that this was the crucifix, the eyes of which turned toward St. Alphonsus while he was kneeling in meditation at the prie-dieu still placed before the altar.

To one side of the room, there is the little, old pianoforte—smaller even than the apartment house type of Baby Grand piano now featured in America—which in days long passed gave up its treasured melodies at the summons of the Saint's talented fingers. Old and worn, decrepit and well-nigh toneless, it remains beneath its plain cover, another witness to the complex elements going to make up this marvelous character. How many dreary hours, in those first, discouraging days of the be-

ginning of the Congregation, it must have helped to make pleasant for the handful of faithful souls who had left all to follow the Saint. And what a number of delightful and pious hymns must have made their musical debut on the stage of those stained, battered keys. For St. Alphonsus was not only a musician, but a composer as well.

In a case over the old piano, there are a number of relics, vestments used when he was Bishop, and his episcopal ring. And in a special case, a vial containing a small portion of blood. Moving on to the church, we find a room filled with souvenirs of the Saint, located immediately back of the altar of the Saint. In glass cases there are the old, patched garments he wore as a Redemptorist, the slightly more elaborate clothing used as a Bishop, his crosier, his simple cane and a number of other objects. One of the most touching is the battered, old ear-trumpet he had used when age brought on defective hearing. And not a bit less remarkable is the silver tube through which he had consumed the Precious Blood, at Mass, when an affliction had left his head permanently bent over in the position generally shown in his pictures. So many familiar objects are about us, so many little details easily associated with one another, that it would take but a slight effort of the imagination to put them together, and see the Saint walk into our midst. However, the profound impression left by these precious memorials could hardly be made more striking by such an event.

Entering a little sanctuary through a curtained doorway, the visitor finds the climax of his pilgrimage attained. A switch clicks some place: the semi-gloom vanishes, and before him, in a glass case beneath the altar, is a life-size statue of the Saint, clad in full Pontifical robes, reposing easily on a silken couch. Within the waxen likeness are the relics of the Saint's body. Here and there the robes have been severed and a glass window inserted, giving a view of the relics. The work has been done so well, however, that no bizarre impression is possible. Everything here is of the best: crosier, mitre and robes. And the artist, in placing the quiet, half-smile on the Saint's features, could not have realized the deeper signification such a smile would convey to the appreciative beholder or to one who had an idea of the characteristics of St. Alphonsus. After viewing the relics in the room behind the altar, the meaning of the smile seems to be quiet, patient amusement at these unusual garments. Love has taken advantage of the helpless remains and forced on them the lavish dignities they had spurned in life.

Yet, withal, it is as it should be. In keeping with the guiding principles of St. Alphonsus' life and in keeping with the Rule he himself had outlined for his Congregation, simplicity is preeminent here. The altar is beautiful but simple. The sanctuary, before the altar, is devoid of all the gaudy ornamentation so often seen at shrines. A few lights suspended from the ceiling flicker away, permanently. A simple, carpeted path leads through another iron railing (the entire sanctuary is enclosed by iron doors and grated walls), to the step of the altar. While we kneel and gaze in thoughtful admiration at the tomb, a few simple people of the neighborhood kneel just outside and their lips move in recitation of the simple prayers they have had handed down from their fathers and their fathers' fathers, even from their spiritual Father resting so peacefully before them.

It is hard to describe the feeling that comes over one while kneeling at that shrine. All of the events of St. Alphonsus' remarkable life spring into form and parade across the stage of memory: his youthful triumphs in halls of learning, the providential defeat in a law case, the heroic renunciation of the world in the face of opposition, the adoption of a mode of life directly opposite to the one his rank would have provided for him, the years of incessant labors as missionary, the vow never to lose a moment of time, the founding of two orders—the Redemptorists and the Redemptoristines; the enforced honors of the Episcopate, the subsequent years of activity as a writer, activity which had for its culmination his great Moral Theology, his last years of physical and spiritual pain, his humble death, glorious and speedy Canonization and Doctorate: finally, his immeasurable influence still exerting its force for good. Minutes slip by easily and swiftly when they are used in the presence of that quiet, simple, smiling form, and with the passing of the time, impressions deep and lasting are forming. And suddenly, the secret of it all flashes through our minds; his principle, his slogan, his lode-star: "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me!" "Leave all—and gain all!" Life is fleeting, life is short; eternity and the things of eternity alone have permanence, alone have weight.

The voice that once thrilled the wicked to penance, and the good to sanctity, is now stilled. But that prone form, smiling quietly on its silken couch beneath the altar, is forever preaching the best, the most eloquent, the most appealing sermon it ever uttered.

Leaving Pagani, with distinct regret, we follow the way leading

through the mountains and the out-of-the-way settlements:—the abandoned places St. Alphonsus had in mind when he had his sons take the special obligation with their vows, of always laboring for the most abandoned souls—to the little town of Ciorani. The scenery is beautiful, for God was the sole landscape artist here. For instance: high up a steep slope and clinging to the edge of a crag, we see a church, and we learn that it is the church which the native Italians attend. We are astonished. Men and women actually climb those rugged paths, even beneath the terrific sun that sears the earth and dries up the streams for five solid months of the year, to go to Mass! We recall the numerous times, Catholics in other lands, living a short distance from a church, often provided with a fine automobile, could not go the five or six blocks necessary to reach the church!

The little towns along the route are usually hidden in sheltered nooks on the sides of the hills. Since the fertile valley-land is precious, the dwellings are piled along a steeper terrain; in between, from hillside to hillside, the fields are filled with vegetables or grain. Since the time of our visit was the harvest time, men and women could be seen at work in the fields. Reaping is done by hand, in fact practically all the work is done by hand. In a few places we have seen threshing machines at work, but even these were small in comparison with the immense affairs in use on the western prairies of America. An American visitor, too, who has gone through these regions must heartily agree with the man who wrote, apropos of the curious immigrant law now in existence in the United States, that the Italians are hardy, healthy and industrious. The annual explanation of the high prices of food-stuffs in the United States, hitherto, at least, based on alleged shortage of labor on the western farms, seems to have a logical and practical solution in Italy.

Suddenly to our right, there appears a rather pretentious gateway, similar to those placed at the entrances to grand villas. Two ornamental posts of stone flank a side-road. One of them bears a neat picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the other a picture of St. Alphonsus. But there is no villa in sight, merely fields and shrubbery, some distant roofs and the everlasting hills. This is our road, however, and soon after following its narrow windings a little distance, we are in full view of the town of Ciorani, with its one street of houses, all facing the sunset, and its one church-steeple standing at the end of the line like

a commander beside his troop of soldiers. Another spot, abandoned in the hills, that St. Alphonsus sought out. Today, the simple, thrifty, contented spirit of the people shows the depth of the impression his prayers and words and example left upon the locality.

A goodly section of the present convent was designed by the Saint himself, and anyone interested at all in problems of modern construction cannot help but admire the efficiency of the saintly architect. Solidity of structure, arrangement of rooms for light and air, and best of all, adaptability to modern improvements, are features which, considering the circumstances of time and place, are nothing less than remarkable. Today, the building with its newer additions, houses the students of the preparatory college for the Redemptorist order.

But the few modern touches have not dimmed the host of sacred associations. There is the room, with its narrow window looking out upon the hills, where the Saint lived and labored for many years. Near it, and hidden somewhat by a staircase, is a small, windowless room, evidently designed as a broom-room, where the Saint did vicarious penance for the souls he labored to save; and today the dull, brown stains of dried blood, still visible on the rough walls, tell of its terrible rigor. There is also the picture of the Addolorata—Our Lady of Sorrows—which spoke to Father de Meo. And best of all, there is the spirit of St. Alphonsus himself existing vividly in the lives and the customs of the Fathers whose privilege it is to inhabit that famous convent.

Night falls fast in these regions, for the sunset, due to the high mountains, is early and twilight very brief. The way lay long and difficult to our next point, so with the lights in the village and in the scattered houses in the hills flickering into being one by one like a flock of little fireflies and with the clear blue sky showing its field of stars in all their splendor, we rumbled along in our primitive carriage through hills and valleys and main streets of now dark towns to our temporary home. And it all seemed like a beautiful dream.

"I am not bound to win; but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live by the light that I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right, stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong."—*Abraham Lincoln.*

Two Hearts and A Song

ONE CHRISTMAS DAY

EDW. A. MANGAN, C.Ss.R.

There was nothing especially remarkable about Helen Milmore, junior at the University of N., to attract Mary Gilbert, a lowly "Frosh." Helen was pretty, yes, decided Mary, she was very pretty, but that quality was not so exceptionally peculiar to Helen as to make her unwontedly prominent among two thousand or more; she was just a very pretty piece of femininity.

On the other hand, there were certain things true of Helen that would dictate Mary's having as little to do with her as possible. Mary's parents had taught her to love her Catholic Faith as her most priceless treasure, compared with which all other things were worthless. In fact, it was only after a long struggle that Mary had obtained her father's consent to her attending the University. And then he had made sure that she would be with a good Catholic family and would carry on a constant correspondence with old Father Burney, her beloved pastor, and would submit all her difficulties to him. And Helen, though a Catholic, was of the so-called liberal-minded type. She thought all Religions were equally good—Mary had heard her say so; she held, too, that such practices as attending Mass regularly on Sundays were perhaps a little excess baggage, a little overburdening to religion which consists (you know) almost wholly of the interior sentiments of the heart toward God. These and other opinions which Mary couldn't square with her conscience, Helen had unconsciously imbibed during the last two years.

And yet, Mary was deeply interested in Helen Milmore. She had reason to be. Why Helen was so constantly watching her, following her every movement, listening attentively to catch the sound of her voice when they happened to be present together at any gathering, was a perpetual source of surprise and wonder to Mary. Time after time, she had caught Helen's eyes fixed on her. There was a meaning in that look. It was always the same, laden with love, with a longing, hungering desire.

So Mary wondered, wondered during three whole months. Her wonder had increased on this evening of December 18th when after laying aside her books and settling herself comfortably to indulge in

a delicious dreamy anticipation of Christmas at home, she had been summoned to the 'phone and had found herself speaking to Helen Milmore.

"Please come over," the voice had pleaded, when Mary had tried to excuse herself.

And now as the chill air nipped her nose and the soft snow falling gently, clung caressingly to her "ritzy" little fur collar, Mary, still wondering, walked the block separating her from Helen's "den."

The effusive greeting she received put the climax to her surprise and wonder. Then, of course, as Helen breathlessly and somewhat incoherently launched into explanations, the wonder began slowly to subside. Helen had opened the door in response to the shriek of an ancient bell, and had impulsively seized Mary's hands. For an instant the two had stood thus and then Mary's response to a silent entreaty in Helen's eyes was a hearty kiss. That had completely conquered Helen's heart.

"You're a darling to come over, Mary," Helen said; "thank you so much. Do you know why I have watched you, loved you so? But, of course, you don't; I have often seen the puzzled look on your face and because it was never an expression of anger, I have loved you more. Mary, your every look, your movements, the sound of your voice, all your actions remind me forcibly of my dead mother, and I miss her so much tonight—more than I have for a long time—I"—

But then Helen's voice broke and as she sobbed forth some of the wrought-up feeling of her heart, Mary petted her bowed head and thought to herself, "This is a new light. Poor dear! Oh God, maybe I can help her; memories of her mother, memories of her childhood, they ought to have a great influence for good, and I can evoke them."

Then she said aloud: "There, there, dear, don't cry; tell me about your mother; I didn't know she was dead."

"Yes, she is dead almost three years. I always think of her, especially at Christmas time, because I still have her favorite hymn and play it often. She used to sing it in her Parish Church before she was married and she kept it with her. Every Christmas she would play it at home and she and dad and I would sing it. Dad loved it, too, though he never became a Catholic. Since mother died, he has suggested that I—Oh I don't know—maybe—but mother"—and then again her voice caught in her throat.

Mary immediately suggested: "Let's hear it, Helen; I'd love to."

"Yes, dear," Helen repeated, "that's one reason why I called you over. I was playing it this evening and, of course, thought of mother and of the times we used to sing it and then I thought of you, dearie."

They were now at the piano and Helen sat down and began to play that beautiful old Christmas Carol recalling the angels' joyful message to the frightened shepherds. "Fear not," begins the soloist, impersonating the spokesman of the angelic choir, "for I announce great joy to you." Another soloist takes up the strain: "A Saviour is born to you," and then as the chief angel continues the message, the whole heavenly choir repeats, "Glory to God in the highest."

Helen had just begun when the unusual excitement visible in Mary's whole attitude arrested her.

"Why, girlie, what's the matter?" she asked.

"Oh you darling," ejaculated Mary, "my stars! that's just the hymn Father Burney is looking for."

"Father Burney?"

"Yes, my old pastor. He has just completed a new Church. The first Mass is to be celebrated at midnight on Christmas Eve. That hymn he learned in college and has not been able to get a copy anywhere; but Oh how he wants it for Christmas! Dearie, dearie, dearie, you've just got to come home with me. We'll start tomorrow—we'll—" Helen was bursting with excitement.

"I'd love to, Mary; I'd love to enjoy an old-time Christmas. You have younger brothers and sisters, I believe?"

"You just know I have; the youngest, Dorothy, is only seven, and still believes in Santy. Oh, we'll have a Christmas tree, songs around the fire, and—"

"Oh, goodie," broke in Helen as she clapped her hands. Then she smiled in a half embarrassed way. "That's what I used to do when I was a little girl," she apologized. "Oh, but girlie," she went on, and deep-seated disappointment was in her looks and voice, "I forgot—my dad!"

"Oh, he can come, too; wire him."

"He'd love it."

"Well, then, that's settled. Now we've got to start tomorrow morning. There are no exams till the end of January so we should worry. We'll tell the powers that be that something special requires our early

departure. I'll say it's something special! Wow! So's your Aunt Hattie. Will Father Burney be delighted!" And Mary caught Helen by the arm, pulled her up from the piano stool and they both tripped across the floor in childish glee.

Mary then picked up her coat and hat, quickly donned them and with a parting, "Be ready for the nine o'clock train; we'll pull in at 4:30 P. M.; be sure and wire your dad; we want him," she was off before Helen could even bid her good-night.

On her way back, Mary continually told herself that she was an instrument of Providence, that this would be the cure needed for Helen Milmore's ailment, so imperceptibly, yet surely snuffing the bright light within her soul.

As they boarded the train next morning, Helen said, "I wired dad, and told him to send the answer to your house; pray that he says 'yes,' dearie."

"This is encouraging," thought Mary, and she never meant anything so thoroughly as she meant her whispered "surely, Helen," in reply.

George, Mary's lawyer-brother, met them at the station and speeded them over the snow-laden road to the homey Gilbert home.

Practice, practice, practice was the whole program for four days. Every available moment was used and everybody, urged on by the love they bore their kind old pastor, labored with zest. Helen was to play; the organist had her hands full with the Mass. George had been the main tenor of the choir for five years so he was given the solo part which runs through the whole song, and he sang it beautifully.

Helen was happy, supremely so. Her father was to arrive on Christmas eve and he and Mary and Helen were to do the decorating of the house and the arranging of the Christmas tree. George was to run the errands, Mr. Gilbert to bring home the turkey, and Mrs. Gilbert was to oversee everything. The rest were given strict orders to keep out of the way.

Tears welled to Helen's eyes several times on the 24th, as old recollections came crowding in on her. Late in the afternoon, she stole away unobserved and made her first confession in months. What peace and joy followed! That evening, she was the life of the party around the fire. She knew all the songs and taught some new ones. Never had she been more happy, never had she seen her dad happier.

And at midnight Mass, after she had received Communion, she retired to a corner of the choir-loft, where she mingled tears with some of the best prayers she had ever said.

Christmas day was a day of joy for all. Helen's face was a beam of the brightest sunshine; so was Mary's. Mr. Milmore was strangely subdued, had been so since midnight Mass. All day long Mary had been waiting for Helen's story; it was coming, she knew; something wonderful had happened.

At last when the day's festivities were over and Helen had kissed her father good-night, she quietly took Mary's hand and they ascended to their room in silence.

Silently Mary turned on the amber reading-light. Then she sat down, her face betraying her emotion, her expectancy. How silent it was! Mary could hear her wrist watch tick away the seconds.

At last Helen came over and kneeling down buried her head in Mary's lap.

"My little Mother," she sobbed; "thank you, Oh thank you."

"Here, here, dearie," pleaded Mary; "sit down; don't, don't kneel to me; sit down and tell me."

"You have won back my Faith for me, Mary."

"Oh no, Helen, I didn't; it was—"

"Yes, you did; this Christmas arrangement was all yours, and before that you were so kind, so good to me. But this isn't all, Mary. First I'm not going back to the University. "No," she repeated, as she saw the surprised look on Mary's face, "I'm not going back. As I was playing that hymn, I decided this all of a sudden and then—I felt so good. I can't risk it again, honey, I'm too happy. Oh Mary, I never heard that hymn sung so beautifully. And, and dad said the same thing. He said he was moved thoroughly and while it was being sung, he decided to become a Catholic. Oh isn't that grand, honey? My dad is to be a Catholic!"

"Yes, dearie, that's wonderful, and about that hymn, Oh it was marvelous. I never knew before what it meant to put your soul into your singing, but I did it that time."

"And I put mine into the playing. I just felt every note. I think my playing was the expression of my gratitude to God."

Never tell your competitor that you can surpass him, but go ahead and do it.

The Maid of Orleans

V. YEARS OF PREPARATION

AUG. T. ZELLER, C.Ss.R.

St. Michael and the virgin martyrs, St. Margaret and St. Catherine, having been introduced to Jeannette, now became her instructors. These saints were well chosen to be her teachers to prepare her for her strange and difficult mission. They, youthful Christian maidens, had shown heroic courage in dying for Faith and virtue. Heroic courage and heroic virtue was what Jeannette needed above all for the fulfillment of her task.

For the next four years these saints came to Jeannette several times a week, instructing, advising, counseling her. Her life during this period had a twofold purpose: the one external, to which her voices always urged her to remain faithful, namely, the exact fulfillment of the duties of her state of life. The other internal—escaping the eyes of men—was the formation of her character for the great mission of saving France. And so it was that, though the brilliance and sweetness of her heavenly visits made her loathe the earth and all it offered, nevertheless she was more dutiful and diligent than ever.

It might be well to call attention to this lest, in the glory of her late military achievement, we overlook the beautiful and saintly character of Joan of Arc.

The great proof of sanctity is humility. It was one of the outstanding traits of her character. She does not speak of her gifts except to her confessor. She continues the calm tenor of her daily life and work. Everybody had to work in the home of James d'Arc, and Jeannette, strong for her age and diligent, contributed much to the upkeep of the home.

Her parents, as an acknowledgment of her docility and diligence, gave her a golden ring on which were engraved the names of Jesus and Mary. Jeannette was delighted with the gift and during her whole career cherished it as the gift of her parents and especially as the symbol of her espousal with Christ.

Her piety and charity continued as before, or rather, increased. This is all that her companions could notice in her. She continued to be the same lovable girl, with a wonderful attraction for prayer, the

Mass, the Sacraments, the adorning of altars and shrines. Jesus seemed, more than ever, to be the one great inspiration of her life.

But the time was drawing near when she must depart on her difficult mission. On January 6, 1428, Jeannette was sixteen years old. Her Voices were becoming always more insistent: "Go, child of God, go to France! You must!"

The girl knelt and replied:

"I am ready! Show me the way; when the time comes I will set out."

Early in the spring of this year the Voices told her that the time had come: She should go to Vaucouleurs, tell the commander her mission, and ask for an escort to the Dauphin. They told her also that her first attempts should fail. At the thought of the difficulties, courage failed her once more.

"Go," said the Voices peremptorily. "God will help you."

That was enough. In May, her uncle, Durant Laxart, who lived at Vaucouleurs, came to Domremy on a visit. To Jeannette this seemed providential. She tried to tell him what she had to do. It was hard to get down to it. She asked about the war. She spoke of the miseries of France. Of a sudden, raising her eyes to heaven, she exclaimed:

"But not all is lost! God will come to our aid. And our fair land, which Queen Isabel has betrayed, a country maiden shall save. * * * You will see this girl who shall triumph over the English. * * * What do I say? You see her this moment—the Maid of Lorraine—chosen by God; it is your poor Jeannette!"

She spoke as one inspired. Laxart, the hard-headed but tender-hearted farmer, looked at his niece. Was she gone mad? Was the evil spirit at work in her? Jeannette waited. Slowly, seriously, she related what had happened to her since that eventful summer day four years ago, and as she talked, giving clear evidence of her good sense and conviction, faith grew in Laxart. By the time she finished her recital he was almost enthusiastic.

"It is God," he cried, "who has spoken to you, my child; I wish to obey like you. What am I to do?"

"Lead me to Robert de Baudricourt, the Captain of Vaucouleurs," she replied quickly, "so that he may send me to the Dauphin."

"I'll do it," answered the man. And he did.

VII. AT VAUCOULEURS

Now you can imagine the situation. Robert de Baudricourt was an old and valiant soldier. He had fought the English and Burgundians for years—his troops being often the roughest adventurers—and despite all his effort, despite all his troops, despite all his bravery and exploits, town after town fell to the enemy. Only a few posts in Lorraine still remained in the power of the French. And Baudricourt saw well enough that Vaucouleurs could not hold out long.

A girl save it? A girl save France? A girl of seventeen accomplish what soldiers could not? Baudricourt listened to Laxart, who came to speak for the girl; but it was plain, he could hardly restrain himself till the man had finished. It seemed too ridiculous.

"My good man," he broke out at last, "your niece is crazy! Box her ears for her and bring her back to her father."

He turned away and would listen no more. Laxart told Jeannette of the rebuff. She knew this must happen and was not much disturbed. She went herself to have an interview with the Captain. Jeannette, though she had never seen him before, picked him out of the crowd.

"I come to you," she said going straight to him, "on the part of my Lord to ask you to tell the Dauphin to keep up courage, but not to give battle to his foes; for my Lord will send him help before the middle of next Lent."

"Why do you tell me this?" asked the bluff soldier.

"Because France will not listen to the Dauphin," replied Jeannette, "but it will listen to my Lord, and my Lord wishes that the Dauphin be king and hold his kingdom as His liege."

De Baudricourt smiled incredulously.

"Yes," went on Jeannette, "the Dauphin will be king despite his enemies, and I shall lead him to the crowning."

"Who is your Lord?" asked the Captain.

"It is the King of Heaven," answered the girl solemnly.

De Boudricourt once more turned away unconvinced. And no wonder. But matters only grew worse. Vaucouleurs now remained the only French post in all Lorraine; it was isolated.

"If God does not intervene," said de Boudricourt, "we are lost irremediably." Gradually, in his desperation, he became more ready to listen to Jeannette's proposals. But he made her wait a whole year. Meanwhile Jeannette, who stayed with a very worthy family in Vau-

couleurs, edified the townspeople by her piety, her frequentation of the Sacraments, her gentleness, sweetness and simplicity, her modesty and diligence in household work.

One difficulty after another presented itself and all but ruined her chances of ever getting to see the Dauphin, Charles VII. Humanly speaking, it seemed indeed impossible. Her Voices kept instructing and encouraging her.

VIII. THE DUKE OF LORRAINE

I dwell upon these events preparatory to her great mission, even at the risk of rendering my account one-sided, because they precisely bring out the peculiarity of her mission.

Significant in this sense, is her interview with the Duke of Lorraine. Hearing of the girl, he became interested in her, but apparently for selfish motives. He was nearly related with the Dauphin, but owing to his enmity with the Duke of Orleans, he was in sympathy with the English. Moreover, he was living at the time with a woman, not his wife, to the scandal of all. He was sick just then and much worried. He asked to see Jeannette.

"Is it true," he asked, "that you wish to meet the Dauphin to fight the English?"

"I assure you," she replied, "that it wearies me much that I am not there already."

"But you do not know how to carry arms or even to ride!"

"By the grace of God, I'll do both."

"Will I be cured of the illness that afflicts me now?" pursued the Duke.

"I do not know. My Voices only speak of France and the aid I must give. Oh, I beg you, have your son lead me to the Dauphin!"

"Tell me whether I shall be cured and what I must do for that," persisted the Duke.

"Your life, noble Duke," replied Jeannette with the outspokenness that characterized all her utterances throughout her career, "does not set your people the example they have a right to expect from their Lord. It is impossible for you to be cured if you do not change. Oh, I beg you, take back your wife, the gentle Duchess."

The Duke was evidently impressed, but only said: "Pray for me."

Jeannette had only one message and one mission. This singleness of purpose soon impressed the people who became enthusiastic about her.

"Why do you wish to see the Dauphin?" they asked.

"I must go to the Dauphin," she would reply, "because my Lord, the King of Heaven, commands it. If I have started on my way, I repeat, it is only by an order from on high. I shall yet accomplish my purpose."

"But it is not enough," they objected, "to have courage and will; there are innumerable obstacles. The whole land between here and Chinon, where the King is, is filled with English troops. How will you pass?"

"I have no fear. The road is open to me. If the enemy tries to intercept me, God my Lord is on my side; He will prepare the way for me to the Dauphin. For this was I born."

All this, naturally, was brought to de Baudricourt. But what influenced him finally to accede to her wishes, was an evidence of her more than human knowledge. The siege of Orleans had already been begun by the English under Salisbury. One day Jeannette appeared before de Baudricourt and said:

"In the name of God, you delay too long to send me on my way. The noble Dauphin today suffered a great loss. Rouvray has fallen. He is in danger of still greater losses if you do not send me to him."

The old soldier was surprised. No news of any battle had come or could come. But next day a messenger arrived confirming Jeannette's words.

De Baudricourt at last consented to send her on her way with an escort of six men.

IX. JOAN

Jeannette was now scarcely seventeen years old. She was well developed for her age. According to descriptions that have come down to us, her body was well formed, her figure robust and agile, her appearance attractive, her face tanned by sun and air, her hair, which was black, was cut short like a boy's, her voice gentle and womanly. She spoke little, but with a strange impressiveness.

Now that she was to start on her extraordinary mission and mingle with soldiers, she put aside her girl's dresses and donned the clothes of a soldier of those days, but all in black. They gave her also a black charger, and she swung herself into the saddle and rode as if she had done it all her life. At her side she wore a sword that de Baudricourt had given her. This she later discarded.

There was something about her appearance that inspired all around her with awe and respect, and the rough soldiers who were with her, all testified to this strange influence.

Henceforth we notice a difference in her name. From the time that she set out on the accomplishment of her work her Voices ceased to call her Jeannette; they always called her Joan. The people, too, adopted this name; only they added, "La Pucelle," or "the Maid."

X. SETTING OUT

Having received from de Baudricourt a letter recommending her to the Dauphin and telling of her prophecy of the fall of Rouvray, Joan resolved to start on her way at once. The little cavalcade of seven rode out of Vaucouleurs late in the afternoon, amid the acclamations of the people.

The Abbey of St. Urbain was to be their first stop. In order to avoid the enemy outposts they had to make many detours, and after riding all night, they reached the Abbey between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning. It must have been a strenuous ride for Joan, unused to such adventures. Still, after a brief sleep, she was up early to attend the conventual Mass and receive Communion, and after breakfast set out with her party again. She was determined to lose no more time.

Sometimes, during the course of the long ride, at sight of the many obstacles and narrow escapes, her attendants were overcome by fear. Joan took all necessary precautions, but for the rest trusted implicitly in her call.

"Have no fear," she encouraged her companions; "we will arrive at our destination and the Dauphin will receive us well."

They asked her at times:

"Joan, will you really accomplish all you have told us?"

"Do not fear," she would reply without hesitation. "What I do, I do by order of heaven; my Voices have taught me my mission: for the last four or five years they have been repeating it to me, and God Himself has given me to know that I must go to war to restore the Kingdom of France."

The men seeing her absolute confidence, her alms to the poor in all places they passed through, her frequent confession, her constant piety, gradually developed an absolute faith in her.

When they reached Fierbois, Joan dictated a letter to the Dauphin:

"I have ridden 150 miles to meet you and bring you assistance. I

have some great things to reveal to you. As proof in advance, I shall recognize you among all your courtiers."

Here she was able to receive Holy Communion and heard three Masses, as if to make up for what she missed under way.

"She is a Saint," said the men and people to one another at sight of her in the church.

On March 6, at noon, she arrived at Chinon. The Angelus was just sounding. The journey had taken eleven days. Noblemen and King's counselors came to see her in the humble lodging she had chosen with a widow; they tried to find out her message and get information for the King. It was difficult to get an audience with the Dauphin. But St. Michael appeared to her and said:

"Be of good heart! My promises are beginning to be fulfilled."

CHURCH UNITY OCTAVE IN 1926

Beginning on the Feast of the Chair of Peter at Rome, January 18th, and ending on the Feast of the Conversion of **St. Paul, the** Apostle to the Gentiles, January 25th, the Church Unity Octave will be observed this year as usual, not only in every diocese of the United States, but throughout the Catholic world.

Ever since Pope Benedict XV, of Holy Memory, extended the Observance to the Universal Church by a Papal Brief, granting an indulgence of 200 days for recitation of the appointed prayers each day of the Octave, and a plenary Indulgence for those who fulfill the usual conditions and go to Holy Communion either on the First or the Last Day of the Octave; the Observance has grown steadily and increased year by year in every part of the Catholic World.

Prayers to be used during the Octave, and other literature, can be obtained by addressing the Central Office of the Church Unity Octave, Graymoor, Garrison, New York.

The trouble with a man who knows but little is that he is always telling too much.

Often a man does himself a favor by keeping on good terms with his neighbors.

Dot's Daddy

GETTING ACQUAINTED

GEO. P. SUNDAY, C.Ss.R.

"Say, Dot, won't you come over to my house for a while. We can have so much fun in the new play-room Daddy fixed up for me!"

St. Agnes' school had just been dismissed. All the children, glad that the day's grind in the school room was over, hurried on their way homeward. Nellie Curran was trying to catch up with her chum, Dolores Walker, known to Nellie by the name of Dot. They were friends tried and true; they were in the same grade in school, the seventh, and were nearly of the same age, Nellie, just twelve, Dolores within six months of her. Dolores was always delighted to spend the hours after school with her chum. It meant such a pleasant time, and besides, Nellie's mother and daddy always did something unexpected that increased their pleasures.

"I'd love to, Nellie, but I'll have to see what mother says first."

The companions walked along till they arrived at the home of Dolores. Nellie waited outside till Dolores ran in the house to ask her mother's permission. In a few moments she came tripping out as if she were flying, and almost sang her answer, she was so happy.

"All right, mother says I can go but I must be home at five-thirty."

They nearly ran the rest of the way, chatting of the little doings of the day at school, and discussing in their child-like way the difficulties that had arisen. They bounded up the steps, and Nellie, opening the door, cried out at once:

"Hello, mother; Dot came home with me." From the kitchen came the response from Mrs. Curran:

"So you're home already, are you!"

Nellie then went into the kitchen and greeted her mother affectionately. Dolores followed after her and stood smiling at Mrs. Curran and Nellie.

"Now, Nellie, before you go to play, I want you to do something for me. I need some things, so before you take off your wraps, run over to the store and get this for me."

Mrs. Curran handed Nellie a slip of paper containing the articles she desired. Nellie and Dot hurried to the store and returned without

wasting any time. The evening in the new play-room is what they desired. In a short time Nellie delivered her parcels to her mother, and then, with Dot following after her, ran upstairs to the room Mr. Curran had fitted out for Nellie and the children. It was an extra room and the father wisely realized that it would be better to keep the children and their toys and trinkets in one place, rather than have them scattered about everywhere. In the room were a miniature dining room set, dishes and other utensils, dolls, doll buggies and games of various kinds; in fact, all of the variety of articles in which little boys and girls delight. Nellie and Dot began their childish play. The table was set, and a make-believe afternoon tea was in progress, when the rest of the Curran children came running in.

With almost one voice they asked: "Can't we play, too, Nellie?" To refuse would have meant trouble and tears, so Nellie wisely arranged to play a family gathering. The laughter and chatter gave evidence of their merriment. Time passed rapidly, in fact too much so. While the play was at its height, Mr. Curran came home from work, tired and hungry. He walked into the kitchen and after a few cheerful words with his wife, asked about the children.

"They are up stairs, Dad; can't you hear them? They are having the time of their life. That sure was a wise thought of yours to fix up that room for them."

Mr. Curran was one of those fathers who not only loved his children with a great love, but always delighted to be in their company. He was never too busy to say a cheerful word to them, nor too tired to mingle in their play. As a result his children idolized him, and when he was around the children wished to be no place else except with him.

After he heard the children's laughter, he turned and quietly walked up the stairs, intending to peek in on them at their play before they could see him. Luck was with him. They were so intent with their fun that they did not hear the squeak on the stairs nor the slip he made on his way. He looked on smilingly and enjoyed their play as he would some great professional performance. It meant something to him. He realized that he again did something that pleased the hearts of his little ones.

He continued to enjoy the scene until one of the little ones, little Mary, spied him. "Oh, Daddy!" she cried, jumped from her play and threw herself in his outstretched arms, folded her tiny arms around

his neck, and pressed her lips and cheeks to his. She was only the first, for soon the others were doing the same, and he had a hard time to share the attention of all. That meant much to him, too. Good-evening embraces often drove worries from his mind, and made him feel that what he had done and suffered during the day was as nothing, because all was done for these precious little treasures God had confided to him. In the rush, he heard the voices of all talking at once.

"Oh, this play-room is so nice. We can have so much fun here. Look, Dot came over to play with us."

"Come on in, Daddy, and look." She led her Daddy in the room by the hand. Little Mary, thoughtful for him, wanted him to sit down on one of the little chairs. He had a difficult time offering excuses in refusing it. He was wise, because it was risky for his weight to use what was intended only for the little ones. He, however, squatted down on the floor, and made himself feel as if he were a child again. He, however, then became the toy. The children forgot their play-things and started climbing over him, turned him into a horse, a ladder, and then made him exercise his already tired muscles tumbling them around in real acrobatic fashion. "It was fun," as the little ones pronounced it.

Little Dot looked on as the little ones ran to give the cheerful good-evening to their Daddy. She watched as they were all, large and small, anxious to crawl into his arms. She sat silently by, almost forgotten, while the daddy and children romped on the floor. Mr. Curran, however, did not leave her unnoticed. He pulled her into his arms with the rest and soon had her enjoying herself with them.

In the joyful excitement, time passed rapidly. Soon Mrs. Curran called up the stairs that it was five-thirty. That meant that Dot's pleasant evening was over. Always obedient, she immediately arose, put on her wraps and started for the door. As she left, the Curran family said good-by in a chorus and followed it with the invitation: "Come again, Dot!"

* * * * *

It was just past supper time in the Neilson home. Dot was helping her mother clear the table, and then dried the dishes for her and stored them neatly away. Dot did not have much to say. She went about her work quietly, but it could easily be seen that her little mind was thinking. She was thinking and thinking deeply. They were thoughts

brought to her from the picture of Nellie's home that still lingered with her. It wasn't that Nellie's home was nicer; on the contrary, Dot's home was larger and much better furnished. There was something else in the picture that kept her thoughts centered. Dot's mother noticed that something was on her mind, and like a good mother, desired to know what it was.

"Didn't you have a good time at Nellie's, dear?" asked her mother.

"Oh, yes, mother, I had a grand time. There was so much fun."

"What seems to worry you, then? You didn't have a quarrel or something like that today, did you?"

"No, not at all!"

"What seems to worry you, then?" Dot let her head droop, and tears began to fall from her eyes.

"Now, Dolores, there is something the matter; come tell me."

In her tears she said quietly, "Why can't Daddy be like Nellie's Daddy?" She couldn't say any more. More tears rolled from her eyes, but her mother understood. Mr. Nielsen was well educated, was congenial at his work, but somehow or other had a cold and distant disposition at his home. He would leave for his work with a mumbled good-by as he passed through the door, and on his return, his evening welcome was nothing more than a hurried entrance and a preparation for supper.

At home he was a man of few words. He would talk to his wife concerning the business of the household, and to his children about their little chores, and about school work. In his presence the children were obliged to be quiet in the extreme. His coming home generally meant the ceasing of all play. The children loved him because he was kind to them, but with that love there was also an intense fear. This contrast put vividness to the picture in little Dot's mind. She often wanted to run and greet him, wanted to throw her arms about his neck and give a good evening kiss, but she was afraid. As he quietly sat in his rocker she often wanted to crawl on his lap and tell her little troubles to him, but she was afraid.

Now after she had seen Nellie's daddy on the floor playing with the children, just like one of them, it was too much; no wonder she said, "Why can't daddy be like Nellie's daddy?" All this she told to her mother in her childish way.

"Now, dearie, don't cry. Your daddy is good, very good, but his

ways are different. You see, his father used to be like that to him when he was small like you, and he thinks that is the way he should be to you!" Little Dot would not be consoled, however, even though her mother encouraged her to cheer up.

Dolores couldn't say any more. She was broken hearted. She was looking for affection from her daddy, whom she really adored, but he did not give it. To forget, she got her books and prepared her lessons for the morrow. Dolores went to bed early that evening. The picture in her mind still lingered. For some time after her father and mother heard her sniffing sobs before she had fallen to sleep.

* * * * *

Mr. and Mrs. Nielsen sat quietly together in the silence of that evening. Mr. Nielsen was reading the paper. Mrs. Nielsen was busy doing some mending on the children's clothes. Nothing was said for some time. As Mr. Nielsen was lighting his pipe again, he casually asked, "What was Dolores crying about?"

Mrs. Nielsen looked up at him and really did not know what to say. She loved her husband, and she understood him thoroughly. She realized often that strict in his manners though he was, he was to a certain degree sensitive. Now she realized more than ever that she had to be careful with her words. She did not want to give him the fact too bluntly that his children feared him.

"Oh, she is just worried over something that happened today, that is all!" This she said rather quietly. She really thought her husband would go on with his reading and would ask no more questions. She was surprised when he asked, "What happened?"

"Oh, it is just a little story. You see she was over to Nellie's place after school, and they had a wonderful time in the room Mr. Curran fitted up as a play-room, and she noticed how happy the children were when Mr. Curran came home, and how they dropped everything and ran to him, jumped into his arms, and how Mr. Curran got down on the floor and played with them, and amused them until it was time for her to come home." This she told slowly, and purposely put stress on Mr. Curran every time she mentioned his name. She thought that in this way he would understand what she did not dare to say.

To her surprise he dropped his paper and said:

"Well, that is nothing to worry over." And she realized that he sensed something more. She then found herself in a predicament.

She was afraid of hurting his feelings, but since so much had been said, she knew that now she must say the rest in order to avoid the disagreeable curiosity from her husband.

"No, that isn't anything to worry over, but it was the fact that you do not act like Mr. Curran with your children. She asked me, "Why can't my daddy be like Nellie's daddy?"

Mrs. Nielsen was somewhat embarrassed in saying this. She felt that there would be some after effects that would be far from agreeable. To her astonishment, he put his head back on the chair, puffed at his pipe, and appeared as if he were in solemn thought. Mrs. Nielsen took advantage of him and continued the little story.

"You see, Dot wonders why you do not kiss them good-by or good-evening, why you do not say cheerful words to them now and then, why you will not be jolly with them, and let them crawl upon your lap. You know that they are afraid of you and everything is quiet just as soon as you come into the house."

Mr. Nielsen still puffed his pipe, and he still thought.

"Well, Bess, there might be something in what you say. I've noticed many things myself, and I am beginning to wonder if there isn't something wrong with me. I hate to think that the children are afraid of me. God knows that I love them."

"Yes, the children know it, too, but naturally they feel that distance that you show toward them. Now you can see how they feel it when they see how other fathers act toward their children!"

"Yes, and you can imagine how I feel it when I see how other children act toward their fathers! I want the children to obey, but I want them to feel that they are obeying not out of fear, but out of love."

"More than that, I think you are losing a lot of their confidence, and you should have that. They have their little stories to tell, and their little wants, and they ought to feel that they can go to you freely. You know that you can always be stern yet kind." The conversation continued for some time before they retired, and when they did so, they were two thinking parents who closed their eyes in sleep.

* * * * *

It was another evening. Mr. Nielsen was again sitting reading and smoking, while Mrs. Nielsen was once more busy at the never-ending mending. The children were in bed, sound asleep. The conversation

changed gradually from the family budget to home improvements and the little difficulties that arose now and then.

"Well, Bess," he broke in suddenly, "I never realized what a fool I was. There was sunshine brightening this place and I never saw it till now."

That told the story of the transformation. The evening after the episode, Mr. Nielsen came home armed with a bright box of candy. As he entered, the children from force of habit stopped their play and followed the old principle of being quiet. They were surprised when he gave them the box, and their eyes bulged when they saw the delicious sweets before them. He had never done this before, although he occasionally gave them pennies with which to buy some. Little Dot, looking at it, was bewildered, and as he stooped over to give the treasures to the children, she threw her arms about his neck and covered his face with kisses. He sat down, even before he had removed his coat, and enjoyed them as they were parceling out the pieces one by one.

All this happened so quickly for Mr. Nielsen that it took him some time to find himself. When he did find himself, he quickly rose to take off his coat and hang it away, for there was a little something in his throat that he wanted to swallow. His plans had failed, but the children's actions substituted for them admirably. Still he was puzzled, for he could not carry out the program as he had arranged it. He, with his thoughts, and the children with their candy, were interrupted shortly by the call for supper. He had forgotten about his wife and now he slowly followed the children to the dining room, said his usual good-evening and left the rest to the little ones to tell. It was amusing to the mother to see how talkative they were. They told her all about "what daddy brought." In fact, it was unusual. She glanced at her husband and smiled, and in the smile could be understood, "Why can't my daddy be like Nellie's daddy?" She knew then that he forced himself to change his disposition, just for his children's sake, and this was the beginning.

As time went on Mr. Nielsen continued his program. Each evening for a while he managed to bring home something that would put joy in the little ones' hearts. This broke down the distant feeling that had been existing. It, too, made them wait for his coming. He felt different, too, as he saw the little ones on the steps, or on the sidewalk ready to greet him. Their warm welcomes made the tiredness from

his toils and his daily troubles vanish. It made him realize that his labors were worth while, and were more than repaid by the smiles of his children when they met him as he came home from work.

He was just getting acquainted at home. No longer did he fear to sit around with them, talk to them, listen to their childish chatter, even join them in their little games. He began, too, to grasp the meaning of words he had heard but did not understand, "the sweetest music on earth, the laughter of little children." The children's love for him grew. This he could not help noticing. They always obeyed, but now their obedience was from pure love, not from fear that dwelt within them before.

As each evening passed by, Mrs. Nielsen sat to one side and smiled. She noticed the change and she thanked heaven that the little child's desire was being fulfilled. Her daddy could be like Nellie's daddy.

Dot visited her friend as usual and had her good time in the play-room as before. Now, however, she always had something to say of her daddy. No longer was she afraid to invite Nellie to her home, even if Mr. Nielsen was there. It was a change and even Nellie's parents noticed it. Little did they think that the change was brought about from what was seen in their home.

Once more the evening's work was over, once more two sat quietly reading, talking, sewing. Mr. and Mrs. Nielsen did not say much, however, but the little ones a great deal. Mrs. Nielsen smiling, said this time so it could be heard, "Why can't my daddy be like Nellie's daddy?"

Mr. Nielsen turned and smiled, too, and then expressed a blessing for the idea to bring home that box of candy. There were many other things he could have brought, but candy and children somehow always go together. That was the simple reason. He rose to retire, and as he did so, Mrs. Nielsen heard him humming to himself the good old melody, "Home, Sweet Home!" Little Dot was a heroine and she did not know it.

Nothing which is morally wrong can ever be politically right—
Gladstone.

Speak little and mildly, little and well, little and simply, little and cheerfully.

Catholic Anecdotes

WELL SAID

An English daily paper recently instituted in its columns a religious symposium, inviting prominent Englishmen of various faiths to give an account of their beliefs. Mr. Compton Mackenzie, the English novelist who has achieved recognition internationally as a writer, who is also a convert to the Catholic Church, was invited to give a reason for his faith. Among other things, he wrote:

"I am a Christian, because without Christianity I should be so much perplexed by the riddle of life, that I could not wait another moment to solve it. I am a Catholic, because only in Catholicism does my skeptical mind perceive a rational synthesis of Christianity.

"If I have appeared bigoted and contentious in this article, my bigotry and contentiousness must be forgiven, because anybody who believes ardently is bound to speak with equal ardor; and if I did not believe and disbelieve with a deep conviction that I was believing what was true and disbelieving what was false, I should never have allowed my voice to be heard at this symposium of testimony."

TRUE EQUALITY

One day, the illustrious Marshal Turenne, one of the greatest generals of the XV century, was kneeling amid the throng of faithful in church, preparing for Holy Communion. When the time came, he rose, and with hands folded and eyes cast down, oblivious of those around him, he walked up to the Communion rail. One of his domestics, not noticing the Marshal, walked ahead of him.

Suddenly he saw what he was doing, and, embarrassed, he stepped aside to let his master pass ahead, saying:

"Pass, my lord."

Turenne looked up and recognized his orderly.

"My friend," he whispered smiling, "My lord was left at the door. Here there is only one Lord: He whom we both go to receive. Go ahead."

Pointed Paragraphs

THE NEW YEAR

A happy New Year to all our readers!

In every human breast smoulders the desire for happiness. It is as unquenchable as it is undeniable. For it is bound up with the urge in every faculty to unfold itself in normal activity. It is this normal activity that brings satisfaction.

Happiness is not a goal in itself; it is rather the accompaniment of perfect action.

This then is what is meant by wishing happiness. Wishing that peace and satisfaction of heart that accompanies the right unfolding of our powers: mind and will, senses and organs, body and soul.

The acquisition of truth, the love of true good, the performance of good works, the fulfilment of duty: these bring happiness as a satisfaction of the soul. The fuller the development, the richer the activity along these lines, the greater the happiness.

These then we wish our readers when we wish them a happy New Year.

THE CHRIST CHILD

The dominant note in the strange harmonies of divinity and humanity in the stable of Bethlehem is humility.

The Son of God taking human form, might have claimed the trappings of Kings—robes, palaces, wealth, court, homage. He was the King of the world.

Nevertheless, He deliberately chose a stable for a palace, a crib for a cradle, shepherds for courtiers, oblivion and negligence for homage.

No wonder He could later say: Learn of Me for I am meek and humble of heart.

Real humility does not lower us. It brings us into the companionship of Christ.

Real humility becomes each one of us; for there is none who will

not see in himself weaknesses, dependencies, shortcomings and sins enough to make him humble; none, indeed, except the spiritually blind.

Real humility will be the source of happiness even—at least it will take the edge off many a poignant sorrow, and smooth many a burdensome trouble and remove countless sources of pain and misunderstanding.

Pride is at the root of many of the sorrows that make earth a vale of tears; while real humility would make the angels sing; Peace to men of good will.

A MUCH ABUSED WORD

"Happy, Happy, Happy," says Mrs. Norris in "A Plea for Less Happy Talk." She is describing a wedding. "The foolish word," she continues, "rules the scenes that follow. May they always be happy. We hope they are going to be happy. Dick and Mary are ideally happy."

"Everyone," continues Mrs. Norris, "even the most disillusioned and experienced of the relatives and friends, speaks of happiness exactly as if it were a complete, concrete thing, tied up in one more jeweler's box."

It is a scathing rebuke for the light use of the word happy in connection with human relationships and pursuits. And she goes on in a tone of high seriousness that rings true from one who, as a novelist nationally recognized, shows that she is thoroughly acquainted with the ways of life:

"Each and every one of us has one obligation, during the bewildered days of our pilgrimage here—the saving of his own soul, and incidentally thereby affecting for good such other souls as come under our influence.

"Happiness has nothing to do with it."

There is a great deal of truth in this. Happiness is not a goal in itself—not something to be sought for its own sake. Above all, not happiness when it means simply sensuality or bodily comfort or the satisfaction of whims and caprices.

Happiness then is only a misnomer for selfishness. And selfishness is anything but productive of real satisfaction. Take anything and try to keep it entirely for yourself, and at once it begins to lose its satisfying quality.

But happiness in the true sense of the word, has a great deal to do with duty. It is its accompaniment—whether that duty is duty to God, or to one's fellowman, or to oneself—even the duty of recreation.

No doubt Mrs. Norris understands this, for she says well:

"Real happiness must be made, not found; and the materials right in our hands at this moment are its ingredients."

Of them we can make happiness as the wide horizons of the earth, and as wide as the boundless realms of eternity.

SCOUTS RENEW VOWS TO THE FLAG

It is a sight well worth seeing, one that fills us with newer hope for the future of our country, to see a troop of young scouts honoring the Flag. We know—they know—it stands for their country.

"We are unfurling our nation's flag," said Judge Backus at such a ceremony. "With cheers and prayers we give to the breeze the symbol of our hopes. The children and men and women who today pay their respects to this emblem are conscious that each is a part of a great community, a country whose effort and purpose have been to raise high the standard of human rights.

"In every age through which mankind has passed, organized communities have had appropriate emblems for the assertion of their authority at home and of their rights abroad. From the Eagles of the Roman Empire down to the national flags of our own times, a peculiar veneration has consecrated these symbols of sovereignty.

"They have been hallowed by lofty and ennobling associations but none of them by higher and more endearing recollections than the flag which floats over us today. The same flag under which our fathers and forefathers battled for freedom, human rights and independence."

The banner of Christianity, so to speak, is the Holy Name. Only it is hallowed by associations loftier and nobler still, endeared by recollections infinitely more sacred. It reminds us not of men who have battled for it, but of a God-made man who shed the last drop of His blood to win it; a banner that secures to us not earthly freedom and human rights merely, but divine rights and the freedom of God.

The Feast of the Holy Name is on the third of January. That day will see the great army of Holy Name men renewing their pledge

of honor. And may all Catholic men unite in this movement to secure due veneration for the name of Jesus, which means Saviour.

SMITH-STERLING-REED-TOWNER: NEXT?

The National Education Association announces that a new bill will be introduced at the first opportunity in the coming session of Congress. It is to be the evolution, by survival of the fittest, no doubt, of the old obnoxious bill.

There are applauders of the announcement: the Masons of the Southern Jurisdiction and the Ku Klux Klan, and they make no secret of their ultimate purpose.

The old bill frankly sought Federal control of education; the new, professes to avoid that by eliminating appropriations. It aims at creating a Federal Department of Education. But why?

Under the Constitution, education is a matter pertaining to the States and forbidden to Congress. Let us keep the last vestiges of State rights that remain.

Congress has enough to do to take care of its own business; there is no need to force them to meddle with business of the States.

The appropriation, which is professedly omitted in this bill, will eventually come. And then the muzzle. This happened in the creation of other departments, at first without appropriations. The supporters of this bill, even with the best of intentions, can give no guarantee that it will not happen in the present case. There is no need for such a bill.

PRAYER

Most of the forces at the use of man are measured, the limits of their powers reckoned. One knows to a definite degree how much to expect from electric current, from a gasoline-driven motor. But the power of one force at the avail of man has never been defined. It is prayer.

Only this is known, that as some have called upon it there has come response, abundant and satisfying. The way was made clear; the needed strength conferred. There is no recorded instance of anyone who was ever made poorer or weaker by prayer.

Our Lady's Page

Our Lady of Perpetual Help AN UNUSUAL PETITION

Dear Reverend Father.

May I ask you to request the prayers of the Archconfraternity of Our Lady of Perpetual Help for a poor, wandering soul, for a young girl who has suffered the greatest loss of all: the loss of belief in God?

Here is her story. Magdalena K. was reared a Lutheran, and at the age of fourteen was confirmed in that Church, though, as she confesses, she had even then lost nearly all belief in God. Daughter of an "Oberlehrer," she distinguished herself in the secondary schools of Germany, and finished with honors at the University of Tuebingen, where the spirit of David Strauss still reigns. Here, amid the frantic applause of the students, she heard her professors in History and other branches frequently denounce the "Roman Doctrine" and "Papal Aggression." She ran the gamut of modern philosophy from Kant to Schopenhauer only to bury herself afterward in Nietzsche and the teachers of the Russian decadence.

The sufferings endured by her family and her nation during the war steeled her heart, and as she says: if she had believed in a God before that calamity and during it, she would feel herself bound to HATE Him for having allowed the innocent to suffer so much.

For nine years now this poor soul has sat in the darkness and the shadow of death. Yet, through God's merciful Goodness, she has preserved and cultivated the natural virtues in a most astonishing way. Her truthfulness, her loyalty, her devotion to her parents and her charity—if one may speak of charity without God—would make many a Christian blush for shame at being her inferior. Though much weakened by the privations of the war and by over-study—she used to study all the harder in order to forget the pangs of hunger—she came to this country just about eighteen months ago in order to be able to help her parents and her sisters by the wages she might earn. Most of that time she has worked as a servant girl. Now, however, she is working as a Nurse.

Knowing the classical and some of the modern languages fairly well, and being an omnivorous reader of literature and science, and possessing artistic abilities above the average, this girl is yet very unhappy. Her plan to omit God altogether from the order of things and to live a kind of semi-stoic life, devoted solely to study, has failed. Every one of her youthful loves is soon killed by a sort of "welt-schmerz" and the philosophy of despair. Pessimistic to the very limit, she has confessed to me that, were it not for her parents, she would long ago have killed herself. During the few months I know her I have tried to bring her into contact with things Catholic—her pet abominations. And, being of a poetic turn of mind, she has actually found pleasure in reading such poems as "The Hound of Heaven." This appealed more to her than even the Catechism.

Now she is a kind of pantheist, and if I can only get enough prayers said for her, I am sure Our Blessed Lady will lead her to God. And if this comes to pass I surely will publish the miracle—for such I consider it will be. I will furthermore have a Novena of Masses said in Thanksgiving to Our Blessed Lady of Perpetual Help.

Respectfully,

A Member of the Archconfraternity.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Kindly breathe a prayer for this poor, erring soul that she may be another of Our Lady's conquests.

IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

"I wish to thank our dear Lady of Perpetual Help, for my prayers were answered. One dear to me received the Sacraments again. I also wish to include the Little Flower of Jesus, St. Joseph and the Sacred Heart. Accept this offering as fulfilling a promise I made if my prayer would be answered."

Enclosed find offering for Masses in thanksgiving for favors granted: the health of my sister and a property sold. Many thanks to Our Lady of Perpetual Help.—N. O., La.

Please publish this thanksgiving and oblige a devout and grateful client of our Mother of Perpetual Help.—St. Louis, Mo.

"I thank you, dear Lady of Perpetual Help, for relieving me of very severe throat trouble after the conclusion of a Novena."

Catholic Events

At the secret consistory held Dec. 14, for the creation of four Cardinals, Pope Pius XI delivered an allocution in which he reviewed the events of the Jubilee year just coming to a close.

First he thanked God for the Holy Year canonizations and for the success that attended the Missionary Exhibition. He pointed out that this exhibit was designed not only to recognize the importance of the labors of religious, but also to emphasize the civil and social Catholic apostolate, to re-awaken interest in missions and missionary works, and to foster vocations. These purposes, he said, have been abundantly realized.

He next referred to the great influx of pilgrims during the year. "There were hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people of all tongues and all nations, of all social classes, bishops, priests, noblemen, plebeians, parliamentarians, artists, teachers, educators, employers, workers, artisans, agriculturalists, the venerable old and the energetic young, in a moving, unforgettable spectacle of grace and strength, unity and work, faith and piety."

Referring to the conditions in Rome he took occasion to praise the co-operation given by the government authorities: "All went well. The public services functioned with order and punctuality. The pilgrims have praised and should praise the public officials. All this was carried on notwithstanding the multiplied difficulties of the nation; nor was there any interruption in the days of the criminal attempt (upon the life of Mussolini) of which the thought alone still saddens us, as we rejoice and render thanks to God for its failure. Without doubt those upon whom the good order of things depends, have shown a realization of the weight of responsibility that they must bear before the whole world. They have shown a clear knowledge and a just appreciation of what honor and the great interests of the country and the Eternal City demand."

The Pope then declared that, so long as present conditions exist, he cannot cross the threshold of the Vatican onto territory over which the Italian Government exercises sovereignty. This, no doubt, referred to recent reports that the Holy Father would leave the Vatican in order to attend the celebrations in honor of St. Francis at Assisi next year.

He then reviewed conditions in Italy, in Mexico, in the Argentine, in Czecho-Slovakia and Yugoslavia, in France, Bavaria and Poland.

He also announced that the extension of the Holy Year indulgences to the entire world during 1926, will not be for a period of six months only, as has been the case after previous Holy Years, but will be for a full year, because this greater extension is more in harmony with the needs of the time.

He finally made a formal announcement of the issue of his encyclical

letter, which will proclaim the institution of the new feast of Jesus Christ, universal King of Society.

* * *

There are several passages in the message which Pres. Coolidge sent to Congress that seem especially deserving of commendation. He said:

"Society is in much more danger from encumbering the national government beyond its wisdom to comprehend or its ability to administer than from leaving the local communities to bear their own burdens and remedy their own evils. Our local habit and custom is so strong, our variety of race and creed is so great, the federal authority is so tenuous, that the area within which it can function successfully is very limited. The wiser policy is to leave the localities so far as we can, possessed of their own sources of revenue and charged with their own obligation."

"We ought to have no prejudice," he further says, "against an alien because he is an alien. The standard which we apply to our inhabitants is that of manhood, not place of birth. Restrictive immigration is to a large degree for economic purposes."

"Bigotry is only another name for slavery," he adds. "It reduces to serfdom not only those against whom it is directed, but also those who seek to apply it."

* * *

Students for the priesthood in the United States have increased by 1,540 in two years, reaching a total of 13,984, it is shown in data just compiled by the N. C. W. C. bureau of education. The figures are a part of a national Catholic education survey it is now making. There are 170 seminaries conducted in 140 institutions in the country. Of these 170 seminaries, 91 are preparatory, and 79 are major seminaries. Teachers in the seminaries in 1924 totaled 1,724; whereas in 1922 there were 1,408. The 13,984 students in the seminaries were divided into 6,178 studying for religious orders; and 7,806 studying for the secular priesthood. In 1922, the total number of students was 12,435.

* * *

With the adjournment of the special session of the Washington State Legislature expected Dec. 19 or 20, and the three bills which propose taxation and harmful restrictions for private and parochial schools still in the house education and taxation committees, it seems improbable that the offensive measures, introduced by Representative Egbert of Pierce County, will survive their incubation period.

* * *

Some of the statistics of the St. Vincent de Paul Society for the United States as published in the Charities Review are very interesting. The Society counts 1,400 conferences with 18,793 active members. The number of families assisted totals 23,028; visits to homes, 243,907; and visits to institutions, 21,507; situations procured, 3,821; total receipts, \$1,133,869.37. The total expenditures amounted to \$1,128,552.82. It is to be noted further that not all conferences reported during the past year.

Dr. James A. Beebe, Protestant, dean of the School of Theology at the University of Boston, recommends to his co-religionists the rosary, because of its vital value in meditation and prayer. He forms a very correct idea of our rosary. The essential thing to do in prayer is to withdraw attention from all except the desired idea or image, to relax, but not into "mere limpness of spirit in which the mind wanders in aimless reverie, and at last becomes sleepy and inert," writes Dr. Beebe. "The will is active in concentrating the attention upon a single object." This is the method of the rosary, he says. The prayers though mechanically recited, are not "vain repetitions". They are of assistance in withdrawing the mind from the outer world as the organ does in the public congregation. And doubtless, in most cases, thinks Dr. Beebe, the prayers go farther and supply positive suggestions to the quieted mind. Impressed thus with the place of the rosary in Catholic devotion, Dr. Beebe suggests a rosary for Protestant use.

* * *

Seventy-five years ago, on Dec. 15, 1850, the first Notre Dame Sisters came to Milwaukee, and a month later they opened St. Mary's School. They came to Milwaukee on the invitation of Bishop Henni. There are now more than 2,000 religious in the Notre Dame order who have Milwaukee as their motherhouse.

* * *

The results attending foreign missions may be judged from the report of Rt. Rev. Arnold Verstraelen, S.V.D., Vicar Apostolic of Ende, Island of Flores, Neth. E. Indies. He writes:

"In the mission at West Flores, founded in 1921, 2,000 Christian children with their pagan parents attend services in the rude church which is no more than a shed. This year 14,241 pagans were received into the church. Whole villages are now Catholic; 33,592 natives are receiving instruction, though some of them have already been baptized. These figures are high, but there still surround us half a million pagans eager to be taught the truths of Faith."

* * *

The following figures on marriages and divorces in the United States were issued by the Department of Commerce: Marriages in 1923, 1,223,924; in 1924, 1,178,206; or a decrease of 3.7 per cent. Divorces in 1923, totaled 165,096; while in 1924 they numbered 170,867, or an increase of 3.5 per cent. Texas led all other states in divorces in 1924 with 15,375 divorces and 71,896 marriages. We are still on the down grade!

* * *

The convention of the Federated Colored Catholics at Washington, D. C., was the largest the organization ever held. Everyone of its 38 affiliated organizations was represented. In the course of their two days' sessions they adopted a definite program of work. The average attendance at business sessions was 300. Resolutions passed urged the encouragement of colored youth to take up higher education; took definite steps for a program to support the Cardinal Gibbons Institute for the education of colored youth; and the affiliation of all colored lay societies with the N. C. C. M., and the N. C. C. W.

==THE== Ligurian Question Box

(Address all Questions to "The Ligurian," Oconomowoc, Wis.
Sign all Questions with name and address.)

On reading the "Imitation of Christ" by Thomas à Kempis, I would like to have you tell me who Thomas à Kempis was; did he write any other books besides the "Imitation of Christ"?

(a) Thomas à Kempis is now generally conceded to have been the author of the well known book "The Imitation of Christ." Probably no book, except the Bible, has gone through so many translations and editions.

(b) Thomas Haemerken, called à Kempis from his birthplace, was born in Kempen, in the diocese of Cologne, in 1379 or 1380. At the age of thirteen he set off from home for the then famous schools of Deventer in Holland. There he joined the so-called New Devotion—an attempt to revive the fervor of the early Christians. The members took no vows; they lived a life of poverty, chastity and obedience, as far as compatible with their state—some in their own houses, and others, especially clerics, in community. All were expected to earn their own living by the labor of their hands—the clerics by transcribing books and teaching school. All earnings were placed in a common fund at the disposal of the superior; the one ambition of all was to emulate the life and virtues of the early Christians, especially in love of God and the neighbor, in simplicity, humility and devotion. The associates called themselves "The Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life."

Thomas was a member for 72 years, during which time the transcribing of books—his own composition as well as the Bible and the works of the Fathers—was his chief occupation. He died in 1471, July 25.

(c) On the catalog of Benziger Brothers, New York, you will find several of his other works: "Meditations on the Passion and Resurrection of Our Lord;" "Vera Sapientia or True Wisdom;" "The Founders of the New Devotion;" "St. Lidwyne of Schiedam"

(edited by him). There also is listed a life of Ven. Thomas à Kempis, by Dom. Vincent Scully. Not all of his works are available in English translation.

Could you tell me something about the life of St. Edna? All I know about her life is that she was an Irish Saint and her feast is on July 5.

(a) In all the Lives of the Saints at my disposal—even in the immense Acta Sanctorum of the Bollandists, I could not find any saint with that exact name. If it is a Saint's name, it must be a variant or corruption.

(b) It might be a variant of St. Ethne, also written Ethna, who was the daughter of King Laoighaire of Ireland. She was converted by St. Patrick and died shortly after her first Communion. Her relics were transferred to the cathedral of Armagh. (Holweck: Dictionary of Saints.)

(c) Or it might be a variant of St. Modwenna, also written Edana, who was a sister of St. Ronan. She gave shelter to Alfred, son of King Oswy of Northumbria, while he was living an exile in Ireland. Called to England when Alfred became King, she educated his sister, St. Elfleda. Soon after she returned to Ireland and died, probably in Scotland, in 695. She is said to have given her name to the city of Edinburgh. Her feast is on July 5.

(d) Another St. Modwenna or Edana, commemorated on July 6, was the daughter of Mochta of Armagh; she received the veil from St. Patrick and labored in the north of Ireland. Her principal foundation was Fochard, also Slieve Cuillin (Killeevy), where she died in 518 or 519. Her original name was Darerca (cf. Holweck: A Dictionary of Saints).

(e) The name Edna may also be found in the book of Tobias, Protestant version, as the name of the wife of Raguel (chap. VII). She is called in our Catholic Bible, Anna.

Some Good Books

The Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. By Cardinal Gaetano De Lai. Translated by a Christian Brother. Published by P. J. Kenedy & Sons. Price \$1.50; postpaid \$1.60.

This is a study on which Pope Pius XI, in a special Apostolic Brief, bestowed the highest measure of praise. Its object is to show how the Blessed Eucharist was prefigured and predicted of old; how it was promised and instituted by the Saviour, and, finally, how insistently the Church, beginning with the Apostles, has ever preached and maintained this doctrine. The deep historical, patristic, theological, and liturgic knowledge of the eminent author shines forth on every page.

The Finger of God. By Rev. Robert W. Brown. Published by Benziger Brothers. Price, \$1.75 net.

A series of brief narratives of striking incidents that reveal aspects of God's ministry unfamiliar to the average layman. The various stories are grouped under headings such as: Stories of Mother Love, Stories about Children, Stories about Conversions, etc.

Tell Us Another. By Rev. Winfrid Herbst, S.D.S. Published by the Salvatorian Fathers, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin. Price, \$1.10 postpaid.

Likewise a book of stories that will delight the children, for whom they were primarily written. The author aptly characterizes them when he says in his Preface: "They are goodness stories. They whisper to the heart of virtuous conduct, of kindness, of fair example." We recommend these sixty-five stories to all who are interested in our growing boys and girls.

Fundamentals of Catholic Belief. By Rev. John F. Sullivan, D.D. Published by P. J. Kenedy & Sons. Price \$2.00; postpaid \$2.15.

This is a companion-volume to "The Externals of the Catholic Church," published by the same author some

time ago. Its purpose is to familiarize laymen with the vital truths of his religion together with the all-important reasons why he believes. A few of the chapter-titles will convey an idea of the comprehensiveness of the book. I. God. III. Creation. V. Theories of Evolution. X. The Primacy of Peter. XXI. Miracles. XXXIV. The Vision of God.

Owing to lack of space we are unable to give detailed review to the following publications. However, in each case the mere mention of the author's name is abundant assurance that you can expect a thoroughly absorbing tale. These books are published by Benziger Brothers.

Sunshine and Freckles. By Rev. Francis J. Finn, S.J. In which an ex-football star turns his attention to Florida real estate, with remarkable results. A book for boys. Price, \$1.00 net.

Stranded on Long Bar. By Rev. H. S. Spalding, S.J. Records exciting adventures on the shores of the Mississippi. Price, \$1.00 net.

Mirage. By Inez Specking. The story of a girl who wanted not too much of life—but fought hard, against discouraging odds, for what she did want. Net, \$1.50. Postage, 10 cents.

Pamela's Legacy. By Marion Ames Taggart. A sequel to "The Dearest Girl." The story of a girl who inherited a million dollars at the age of sixteen. Price, \$1.50 net.

Martha Jane. By Inez Specking. A true and delightfully attractive picture of the Catholic boarding school. Price, \$1.50 net.

We wish likewise to call attention to the following publications:

Saint Antony's Almanac (30 cents, postpaid). *Manna Almanac* (20 cents). *Catholic Nursery Rhymes.* A Life of Our Lord in verse for young Children (25 cents). *Maria-Hilf-Kalendar* (30 cents).

Lucid Intervals

A dispute arose between two old ladies as to the name of the music the band was playing. Said the first: "It's the Overture from 'The Mastersingers.'"

"Rubbish!" declared the second. "I should think I know the Prelude from 'Lohengrin' when I hear it."

As neither would give in, No. 1 consulted a notice-board. "We're both wrong," she announced on returning. "It's 'Refrain from Spitting.'"

Teacher — A biped is anything that goes on two feet. John, can you name one?

John—Yes, ma'am, a pair of stockings.

A young woman of heroic build met a man who had known her father and mother. As he gazed at this plump Juno the light of memory came into his eyes.

"Let me see," he mused, "which side of the house do you resemble most?"

"Sir," she cried in accents far from mild, "I don't resemble the side of any house."

A stout woman drove up to the filling station.

"I want two quarts of oil," she said.

"What kind, heavy?" asked the attendant.

"Say, young man, don't get fresh with me," was the indignant response.

An editor received two dollars and a cork from a delinquent subscriber. When they met later the editor said: "I understand about the money because that was what you owed, but what does the cork mean?"

"Stop'er," was the reply.

A woman staying in a hotel was frightened by a noise like that of a person running about in a room over the one she occupied.

The noise went on at intervals for two nights and then changed, as if the occupant on the floor above had gone

mad and was skipping about. The woman did not believe in ghosts, but she was afraid of them, so she asked the clerk to investigate the mystery.

It was a sick foreigner obeying the imperfectly understood directions of an English medical man:

"Take the medicine two nights running, then skip a night."

Editor — "The jokes we're getting nowadays are certainly awful!"

Assistant Ed—"Oh, not all of 'em, I just chucked a bunch in the stove and the fire simply roared!"

"Your bootlegger friend seems to be a very pleasant fellow."

"Oh, yes, he has his good pints."

Jean Ware had gone to visit with her mother, and had telephoned to Frank that she would not be returning until the following morning.

When she got back she said to her husband: "You managed to find something to eat last night, didn't you dear?"

"Oh, yes," replied Frank cheerfully, "I had the steak that was in the ice box and fried it with some onions I found in the cellar."

"Onions!" gasped Jean. "Oh, Lord! Darling, you've eaten my lily bulbs!"

The bluff old colonel was telling a jungle story in the club coffee room.

"Yes," he exclaimed dramatically, "it was in the dead of night. Outside was a roving elephant bent on destruction. I crept out and shot it dead in my pajamas."

"But colonel, how did the thing get into your pajamas?" drawled one of his listeners.

"Jimmy," said a mother to her quick-tempered small boy, "you must not grow angry and say naughty things. You should always give a soft answer."

When his little brother provoked him an hour afterward, Jimmy clenched his little fist and said, "Mush."

Redemptorist Scholarships

A scholarship is a fund the interest of which serves for the education of a Redemptorist missionary student in perpetuity.

Those who have given any contribution, great or small, to the burses shall have a share in perpetuity in the daily Masses, the daily Holy Communions, and daily special prayers that shall be offered up by our professed Students for the founders and associate founders of Redemptorist Scholarships. It goes without saying that the donors are credited with their share of the works performed by these students after they have become priests.

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Burse of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Kansas City, Mo.)...	2,007.00

* * *

Burse of St. Joseph (Married Ladies, Rock Church, St. Louis), \$1,893.64; Burse of St. Cajetan (Single Ladies of Rock Church), \$3,166.78; Burse of St. Joseph, \$643.00; Burse of St. Francis Assissi, \$1,007.50; Burse of the Little Flower, \$2,946.75; Burse of St. Thomas, Apostle, \$201.00; Burse of St. Jude, \$262.50; Burse of St. Rita, \$506.00; Burse of St. Anne, \$652.00; Burse of St. Gerard, \$527.00; Burse of the Sacred Heart, \$251.00; Burse of Holy Family, \$20.00; Burse of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, \$423.00; Burse of St. Peter, \$225.00; Burse of the Poor Souls, \$2,500.00; Burse of St. Alphonsus, \$15.00; Burse of St. Anthony, \$3.00; Burse of the Poor Souls, \$1.00; Mr. F. Henze Burse, \$600.00; Burse of Ven. Bishop Neumann, \$417.25.

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